



AYER

Middlesex County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of Ayer grew up around the railroad industry in the 1840's and the railroad continued as a major force in shaping Ayer's economy through the early 1900's. Railroad switching yards, tanneries and mills prospered as a result of railroad transportation in the area which is now the Central Business District. Ayer is served by commuter rail service today and the town is within easy access of three major roadways, I-495, I-290 and Route 2.

While Ayer is primarily residential, the close proximity to these major transportation links fueled industrial development throughout the town which made the manufacturing industry the largest employers in the town in the 1980's. However, by 1990, the service sector had become the community's largest employer, followed closely by retail trade employment. Commercial activity and retail activity has continued to expand in Ayer. The town is one of the four communities that serves as a host to Fort Devens, a major influence on the town. Fort Devens employs almost 8,000 people and has been a major factor in the local and regional economy. The pending closing of Fort Devens will have a profound impact on Ayer and the town is seeking to address and mitigate this impact as well as the effect of recent increases in poverty and decreases in population.

(Narrative supplied by community)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Northeastern Massachusetts, bordered by Shirley on the west, Groton on the north, Littleton on the east, and Harvard on the south. Ayer is located 27 miles northeast of Worcester, 35 miles northwest of Boston, and 207 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 9.57 sq. miles

Land Area: 9.02 sq. miles

Population: 6,871

Density: 762 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Clinton Station)

Normal temperature in January.....23.4°F

Normal temperature in July.....71.3°F

Normal annual precipitation.....47.0"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Ayer

Regional Planning Agency

Montachusett

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)

Boston



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (978) 772-3642

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen
Executive Secretary
Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1871

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%	
Total Registered	2,696		
Democrats	812	30.1	%
Republicans	371	13.8	%
Other parties	10	0.4	%
Unenrolled Voters	1,503	55.7	%

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Ayer town, Middlesex County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	7,287	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	7,287	100.0
Male.....	3,585	49.2	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	342	4.7
Female.....	3,702	50.8	Mexican.....	47	0.6
Under 5 years.....	513	7.0	Puerto Rican.....	141	1.9
5 to 9 years.....	482	6.6	Cuban.....	2	-
10 to 14 years.....	431	5.9	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	152	2.1
15 to 19 years.....	547	7.5	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	6,945	95.3
20 to 24 years.....	420	5.8	White alone.....	6,118	84.0
25 to 34 years.....	1,280	17.6	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	1,364	18.7	Total population.....	7,287	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	848	11.6	In households.....	6,835	93.8
55 to 59 years.....	322	4.4	Householder.....	2,982	40.9
60 to 64 years.....	204	2.8	Spouse.....	1,280	17.6
65 to 74 years.....	462	6.3	Child.....	1,928	26.5
75 to 84 years.....	274	3.8	Own child under 18 years.....	1,517	20.8
85 years and over.....	140	1.9	Other relatives.....	237	3.3
Median age (years).....	34.8	(X)	Under 18 years.....	96	1.3
18 years and over.....	5,539	76.0	Nonrelatives.....	408	5.6
Male.....	2,683	36.8	Unmarried partner.....	218	3.0
Female.....	2,856	39.2	In group quarters.....	452	6.2
21 years and over.....	5,220	71.6	Institutionalized population.....	177	2.4
62 years and over.....	987	13.5	Noninstitutionalized population.....	275	3.8
65 years and over.....	876	12.0	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	319	4.4	Total households.....	2,982	100.0
Female.....	557	7.6	Family households (families).....	1,773	59.5
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	878	29.4
One race.....	7,082	97.2	Married-couple family.....	1,280	42.9
White.....	6,261	85.9	With own children under 18 years.....	598	20.1
Black or African American.....	415	5.7	Female householder, no husband present.....	363	12.2
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	19	0.3	With own children under 18 years.....	219	7.3
Asian.....	211	2.9	Nonfamily households.....	1,209	40.5
Asian Indian.....	36	0.5	Householder living alone.....	979	32.8
Chinese.....	36	0.5	Householder 65 years and over.....	265	8.9
Filipino.....	12	0.2	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	952	31.9
Japanese.....	21	0.3	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	558	18.7
Korean.....	57	0.8	Average household size.....	2.29	(X)
Vietnamese.....	27	0.4	Average family size.....	2.94	(X)
Other Asian ¹	22	0.3	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	10	0.1	Total housing units.....	3,154	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	2,982	94.5
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	4	0.1	Vacant housing units.....	172	5.5
Samoa.....	3	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	3	-	occasional use.....	13	0.4
Some other race.....	166	2.3	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	1.3	(X)
Two or more races.....	205	2.8	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	6.2	(X)
<i>Race alone or in combination with one</i>			HOUSING TENURE		
<i>or more other races: ³</i>			Occupied housing units.....	2,982	100.0
White.....	6,418	88.1	Owner-occupied housing units.....	1,661	55.7
Black or African American.....	509	7.0	Renter-occupied housing units.....	1,321	44.3
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	68	0.9	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.52	(X)
Asian.....	277	3.8	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.00	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	21	0.3			
Some other race.....	216	3.0			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Housing Information: (Units, occupancy, value, structure type, year built, etc.) -
[U.S. Census Bureau Tables](#)

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Residential Building Permits (New single and multi family; monthly, YTD & historical) -
[U.S. Census Bureau Tables](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State:	74
Conventional Federal:	0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP:	9
Federal (Section 8):	0



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

The principal highway is State Route 2, the old Mohawk Trail, which runs across northern Massachusetts. State Route 140 and Interstate 190 connect the region to Worcester. The Springfield Terminal Railway line (the former Boston and Maine Railroad) parallels Route 2 and provides access to the network of intermodal facilities serving central and eastern Massachusetts.

Major Highways

Principal highways are State Routes 2A, 110, and 111.

Rail

Commuter rail service is available to North Station, Boston. Travel time: 66-73 minutes; no parking. Conrail and the Springfield Terminal Railway (STRR) offer freight service to Ayer, which is the site of an intermodal facility opened by the STRR in 1993. Conrail operates an auto transloading facility for newly manufactured motor vehicles in Ayer. Contact number for Conrail: (617) 783-6222; for the STRR: (978) 663-1073

Bus

Ayer is a member of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MRTA). There is no fixed route service and MRTA provides paratransit services to the elderly and disabled through the Council on Aging.

Other

Fitchburg Municipal Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility, has 2 asphalt runways 4,511' and 3,502' long. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision. Shirley Airport, a privately owned public use facility, has a 3,250'x 55' asphalt runway with a copter approach.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

None

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

Nashoba Community Hospital

Long Term Care

Apple Valley Continuing Care

Woodford Of Ayer Nursing Home

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

None

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Department of Housing and Community Development would like to thank the many government agencies noted as having provided information for the community profiles. In addition to these agencies, the Regional Transit Authorities assisted with the transportation component of the profiles. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of many city and town officials, which enabled us to include information obtainable only at the local level. DHCD would also like to thank the following individuals for providing special help: Leslie A. Kirwan, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Local Services, Department of Revenue; Richard Shibley, Deputy Secretary of State; Bob Beattie of the Department of Public Health; Charles W. Clifford from the Martha's Vineyard Commission; Dennis Coffey of the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction; Donna Fletcher and Christian Jacqz of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs; James Griffin from the MBTA; Karen Loh from Banker & Tradesman; Todd Maio from the Department of Welfare; Geoffrey Morton from the Election Division of the Secretary of State's Office; Stephen R. Muench of the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission; Rol Murrow of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association; Mary Ann Neary and Emmanuelle Fletcher, reference librarians at the State House Library; Jeff Nellhaus from the Department of Education; and George Sanborn, reference librarian at the State Transportation Library.

NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.